

Remarks/Arguments:

Favorable reconsideration of this application in view of the present amendment and in light of the following discussions is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-18 are currently pending in the application. Claims 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, and 18 are currently unchanged, Claims 2, 4, 6, 10, and 16 are currently amended, and Claims 1, 14, 15, and 17 are cancelled. The changes to the claims are supported by the originally filed specification and do not introduce any new matter.

In the Final Office Action, (1) the drawings were accepted; (2) the specification was objected to as introducing new matter; (4) Claims 1, 2, 7, and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by JP 11-115662; (6) Claims 3, 8, 9, 11, and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 11-115662 in view of Notestine et al (U.S. Re. 28,876); (7) Claims 4 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 11-115662 in view of Neubrand (US 6,217,104); and (8) Claim 13 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 11-115662 in view of Hobrecht (US 4,900,058);

With respect to the objection to the specification, the first two new sentences introduced to the specification in the previous amendment and objected to by the examiner have been deleted. Thus this objection has been overcome.

With respect to the rejection of Claims 1, 2, 7, and 10 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by JP 11-115662, Claim 1 has been cancelled. Claims 2 and 10 are currently amended to depend on allowed Claim 16. Claim 7 is unchanged, but depends on Claim 6, which is currently amended to depend on allowed Claim 16. Applicant requests that Claims 2, 7, and 10 be allowed as amended.

With respect to the rejection of Claims 3, 8, 9, 11, and 12 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 11-115662 in view of Notestine et al (U.S. Re. 28,876), Claim 3 is unchanged, but now depends on Claim 2, which then depends on allowed Claim 16. Claims 8 and 9 are unchanged, but depend on Claim 7, which depends on Claim 6, which then depends on allowed Claim 16. Claims 11 and 12 are unchanged, but depend on Claim 10, which depends on allowed Claim 16. Applicant requests that Claims 3, 8, 9, 11, and 12 be allowed as amended.

With respect to the rejection of Claims 4 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 11-115662 in view of Neubrand (US 6,217,104), Claim 4 is currently amended to depend on allowed Claim 16. Claim 5 is unchanged, but depends on Claim 4, which then depends on allowed Claim 16. Applicant requests that Claims 4 and 5 be allowed as amended.

With respect to the rejection of Claim 13 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 11-115662 in view of Hobrecht (US 4,900,058), Claim 13 is

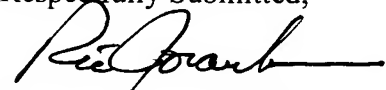
unchanged, but depends on Claim 10, which then depends on allowed Claim 16.

Applicant requests that Claim 13 be allowed as amended.

Previously cancelled Claim 6 is currently amended to depend on allowed Claim 16. Applicant requests that Claim 6 be allowed as amended.

In conclusion, applicant requests allowance of the pending claims remaining in the application, including Claims 2-13, and the previously allowed Claims 16, and 18.

Respectfully Submitted,



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